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Tuesday, December 20, 2011
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News worth sharing.

▶ Jon Turk, left, and Eric Boomer at the end of their 104-day journey around Ellesmere Island in Canada's arctic.

CONTRIBUTED

Arctic trek earns nod

East Kootenay man nominated for National Geographic award ◐ 104-day kayak journey nearly killed Jon Turk

DANIEL PALMER
VANCOUVER@METRONEWS.CA

A 66-year-old Fernie man has been selected as one of the finalists for National Geographic's 2012 Adventurer of the Year after a 104-day journey around a remote Arctic island.

Jon Turk and Eric Boomer, 25, circumnavigated the punishing terrain of Ellesmere Island — near Baffin Island in Nunavut — by kayak last summer.

"After Day 1, we did 15 miles. We had 2,400 to go and I went, 'I can't do this. I'm gonna wake up in the morning and tell Boomer we've got to go back. This is just crazy,'" said Turk.

No stranger to physical feats, Turk kayaked from Japan to Alaska and crossed the Gobi Desert by mountain bike.

But the Ellesmere trip required completing a half-marathon every day for more than three months through ice and snow, something Turk says was a privilege to experience despite its challenges.

"It's an old recipe to go into the desert and seek enlightenment. Is it enjoyable? No, of course not. But you're into a zone where you're pushing yourself into a different mental state," he said.

"I was as happy as I've ever been in my life day after day. Tired, hurting, frustrated — of course. But at the same time, you knew you were in a place you'd never been before and you'd never be again."

Upon completing the journey, Turk's body gave out and he spent weeks recovering in hospital. While he admits he pushed himself too hard, Turk says he is unlikely to give up his passion for expedition.

"Find that thing that makes you most ecstatic and then pursue it," he said.

People can vote for the 2012 Adventurer of the Year until Jan. 18 at nationalgeographic.com.

For more news, visit metronews.ca/vancouver

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Dictator's death sparks hope

Eunice Oh got a round of applause when she announced the death of Kim Jong Il to a gala evening of Korean Canadians on Sunday night.

"Every single person got excited about that news," said Oh, the president of the Korean Society of B.C., adding that she thinks the vast majority of Metro Vancouver's 80,000 Koreans are cautiously optimistic after the North Korean dictator's demise.

Kangil Choe, president of the National Unification Advisory Council for Koreans in the Lower Mainland, said the news came as a "shock."

That surprise quickly gave way to "what ifs" after he and his church group learned the news Sunday night. North Korea can be a violent, unpredictable neighbour, Choe explained.

"Nobody knows what they're going to do. That's our biggest concern," said Choe.

Other questions swirled in the community about Kim's possible successor.

"We are hoping for a more reasonable leader," Oh said.

The dream scenario would be a unification of North and South Korea, a vision many local Koreans share, said Oh.

Without help from the international community, North and South Korea "cannot be one again," said Choe. "Hopefully the death of Kim Jong Il is a positive sign." STEPHANIE ORFORD

N. Korea reacts {page 8}

PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS/METRO

▶ Four-year-old Luke Feist thanks donor Sydney Doberstein at the Oak Street blood-donor clinic on Monday. Feist has a rare blood deficiency that makes him reliant on blood transfusions for treating minor injuries.

Port Moody boy gives thanks for gift of blood

Four-year-old relies on blood donors to stay alive ◐ Family asking the public to give over the holidays when donations are badly needed

Four-year-old Luke Feist was running around barefoot Monday, thanking everyone donating at a blood-donor clinic for helping save his life.

Luke has one of just six reported cases in Canada of a deficiency of Factor V, an essential component for blood clotting.

His mother, Jennifer, says Luke's condition is "one in a million." His blood doesn't clot, so he has to get a blood transfusion every time he gets minor injuries like a cut lip or bitten tongue, and as a preventative measure before any medical procedure.

Darryl Feist, Luke's dad, says it is always a constant worry for the family since Luke is such an active boy.

"At times, it's very nerve-racking … (even) corners of the tables and jumping off the furniture," he said. "He's (four) and he wants to play, run and jump."

Luke's parents said they are grateful to blood donors for their life-saving gift as their son will need blood for the rest of his life.

"Thank you for donating your blood," Luke told Sydney Doberstein, 20, who was at the Oak Street blood clinic.

Doberstein said she became a blood donor last year and has contributed four times already.

"I've never met anybody like Luke before," she said. "It's pretty special, and (seeing him) makes me feel really good for doing this." PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS

Ruling on drunk-driving law dangerous: Lawyer

The public will be in danger if a B.C. Supreme Court judge doesn't suspend a ruling that struck down the province's drunk-driving law, a government lawyer said.

George Copley told Justice Jon Sigurdson on Monday that the regulation that allowed for automatic roadside suspensions has saved dozens of lives and more than halved injuries since it was implemented over a year ago.

He asked the court to suspend the declaration that the law is unconstitutional until June next year, giving the legislature the opportunity to create legislation in response to the ruling.

"There is a danger to the public if this legislation is not kept in force," Copley said. "The public interest requires that there be an effective drunk-driving law."

Earlier this month, Sigurdson ruled that a portion of B.C.'s year-old laws to crack down on drunk driving violated charter protections against unreasonable search and seizure.

Sigurdson concluded drivers who blew over .08 in a roadside screening test were subjected to having their vehicles impounded and forced to pay up to several thousand dollars in fines without having recourse to a meaningful appeal process.

Copley also warned of "financial chaos" for the provincial government if the judge ruled that it had to pay back the thousands caught up in the scheme.

The government has said that more than 15,400 people either failed a roadside test or refused to blow.

Each of those drivers paid about $4,000 in penalties, fees and other costs, which Copley said could add up to about $50 million. THE CANADIAN PRESS

1 news

More and more of China's Communist Party members are flouting compulsory atheism, much to the consternation of top officials. Scan the code for the story.

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These days, the best indicator of how the North American markets will perform is not North American data, says Allan Small, but European data. More at metronews.ca/investing

Report prompts BC Hydro to improve meter practices

STEPHANIE ORFORD
VANCOUVER@METRONEWS.CA

BC Hydro hasn't adequately informed the public when it comes to implementing its new smart meters, according to an independent review released Monday.

The report, released by Elizabeth Denham, B.C.'s information and privacy commissioner, found BC Hydro's practices measure up to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act in all matters but one.

According to the report, BC Hydro had not sufficiently informed individuals what personal information the smart meters collect, how BC Hydro is using that data, what legal authority they have to collect it, and who the customer can contact with questions about privacy and security.

Denham investigated BC Hydro's implementation of the new technology after her office received more than 600 complaints and pieces of correspondence from British Columbians about the utility's new electricity meters.

After receiving the report on Monday, BC Hydro immediately went to work developing an action plan to address all 14 of the report's recommendations, said Cindy Verschoor, manager of communications for BC Hydro's Smart Metering program.

"We've been communicating with the public for a few years now about the Smart Metering program," she said, but added that BC Hydro would be making a concerted effort to increase one-on-one communication with customers.

"I think it's really important that citizens know what it is that public agencies are doing with their personal information," said Denham.

For more local news visit metronews.ca/vancouver

Microlofts offer a tight squeeze

Despite lack of space, tenants appreciate proximity to downtown

DANIEL PALMER
VANCOUVER@METRONEWS.CA

What would you pay for a bachelor suite the size of two parking spaces?

Canada's smallest rental suites were unveiled Monday on the Downtown Eastside, but some local residents are upset at what they claim is the gentrification of the neighbourhood.

The microlofts, open since September at 18 West Hastings St., rent for an average $850 a month with some units more than $1,000. They range in size from 226 to 291 square feet and are rented mostly by students and young single workers, said Jon Stovell of Reliance Properties.

"These are around $200 a month cheaper than a typical new apartment of this quality," said Stovell, who along with ITC Construction built and subsidized the project.

The initial rent estimate was $700 when the project was proposed in 2007, but the new units are fully furnished and include television and Internet, he said.

"Affordability and livability is in the eye of the beholder," said Vancouver Coun. Kerry Jang.

"So what we're trying to do here is create a range of housing options for different people across the city."

Outside the building, a few dozen protesters beat drums and said the prices are too high for low-income renters.

"We're going to interrupt you the same way you interrupted the lives of low-income people by producing housing that excludes them," said one protester. "We need social housing in the Downtown Eastside, not $850-a-month housing."

Microloft tenant Glynnis Hawe grew up in East Vancouver and said she found it difficult to find affordable rent even after six years of post-secondary studies.

"I think it's not just a low-income problem; it's an average-income problem as well."

DANIEL PALMER/METRO

▶ The inside of a microloft at 18 West Hastings St. The Burns Block suites were unveiled Monday.

Fake cash seized

Four men have been arrested following one of the largest counterfeit-money seizures in British Columbia's history, Mounties announced Monday in Surrey.

A total of $1.15 million in uncut $100 bills was seized, along with credit cards, computers and equipment, during a raid Dec. 11 at a "counterfeit currency factory" inside a Richmond apartment.

Four men in their early 20s were arrested and are now facing charges of making and possessing counterfeit banknotes and for possessing instruments for making counterfeit banknotes.

METRO

Clark's popularity below NDP's Dix

B.C. Premier Christy Clark has a lower approval rating than New Democrat Leader Adrian Dix, an Angus Reid Public Opinion poll revealed Monday.

Some 40 per cent of British Columbians surveyed said they approved of Clark's job as premier, a slight drop from the 42 per cent approval she received this summer.

Dix's approval rating is 47 per cent.

The survey, which ranked the popularity of nine premiers, saw Clark tied in fifth place with New Brunswick Premier David Alward.

METRO

News in brief

Man arrested in ferry scuffle

ATTACK. A 26-year-old man is facing charges after attacking several B.C. Ferries workers when he missed a sailing from Departure Bay in Nanaimo on Saturday.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Bighorn sheep shot in Interior

OUT OF SEASON. Someone is killing bighorn sheep — out of season — in the Interior.

Conservation officer Sergeant Steve Wasilyk says a total of five sheep — four rams and a ewe — have been shot in two separate incidents since last Tuesday.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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VPD: 'We are not backing off'

- Cop is optimistic Crown will approve all new charges
- Strategy to increase riot website's traffic in the works

PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS
@METRONEWS.CA

PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS/METRO

▶ Insp. Les Yeo

Vancouver police have recommended another 52 charges against 20 more suspected Stanley Cup rioters.

Insp. Les Yeo, of the integrated riot investigation team (IRIT), announced the second round of recommendations on Monday morning and promised there's more to come.

So far, police have recommended a total of 215 charges against 80 suspects.

"My message to the rioters who think they have gotten away with their crime spree: 'We are not backing off and more arrests and more charges are just around the corner,'" said Yeo, noting that IRIT is "hard at work" preparing for a third batch early next year.

The VPD announced its first round of charges Oct. 31, with 163 recommended charges against 50 men and 10 women. The Crown has so far approved 69 criminal charges against 27 people who allegedly took part in the June 15 riot.

Of the 20 new suspects, 16 are men and four are women. The average age is 19 and six of the accused are juveniles — the youngest is a 15-year-old male.

One of the new cases involved a 19-year-old man from Surrey, who is accused of assaulting a Good Samaritan who was trying to stop rioters from smashing store windows on Granville Street.

Police allege the man punched the Samaritan in the back of the head.

Baby's. First Christmas

▶ Olga Gavrilko and her newborn get a visit from Santa Claus on Monday at the maternity ward at St. Paul's Hospital.

ARTHUR YEE/PROVIDENCE HEALTH CARE

Santa makes rounds at maternity ward

Renowned band leader Dal Richards made his annual trip to the maternity ward on behalf of Variety. Richards' daughter Dallas was born at the hospital in 1951.

Police search for taxi robber

North Vancouver RCMP are seeking the public's help in identifying a man who attempted to rob a North Vancouver taxi driver.

On Oct. 15, the man pulled a knife out and demanded a driver hand over all his money. The cabbie jumped from his car and the man ran off.

He's described as an English-speaking Caucasian, 20 to 25 years old, about six feet tall with a slim build and short light-brown hair. SHIHO YODA

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North Koreans mourn 'Dear Leader'

Kim Jong Il died of a heart attack on Saturday State media already declaring his son the new leader

North Korea prepared to lay longtime ruler Kim Jong Il to rest while the hermit state's official media on Tuesday lauded his son and heir apparent as a person "born of heaven" — suggesting the transition to a new leadership was under way.

The streets of the North Korean capital, Pyongyang, were quiet Tuesday morning as thousands grieved the death of their "Dear Leader." With an 11-day mourning period in effect, flags flew at half-mast, shops were closed and streams of mourners — some wailing — placed flowers at memorials around the city.

Kim's death and the possibility of a power struggle in a country armed with nuclear weapons and known for its unpredictability has heightened tensions in the region.

U.S. President Barack Obama agreed by phone with South Korean President Lee Myung-bak to closely monitor developments. Japan's government also said it was being vigilant for any "unexpected developments."

"How could the heavens be so cruel? Please come back, general. We cannot believe you're gone."
HONG SON OK, GRIEVING KOREAN WOMAN

South Korea's military has been put on high alert, and experts warned that the next few days could be crucial.

North Korean state media have given clear indications that Kim's third son will succeed him. The Korean Central News Agency on Tuesday described Kim Jong Un as "a great person born of heaven," a propaganda term only his father Kim Jong Il and his grandfather Kim Il Sung had enjoyed.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

KYODO NEWS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

▶ North Korean women cry after learning of the death of their leader Kim Jong Il on Monday, in Pyongyang, North Korea.

PM calls for end to Korea's 'sad chapter'

Prime Minister Stephen Harper is urging North Korea to work toward promoting both the well-being of its people and stability on the Korean peninsula.

Harper, commenting on the death of North Korean leader Kim Jong Il over the weekend, says he hopes Kim's passing will bring positive change to the isolated country.

He says Kim will be remembered as the leader of a totalitarian regime who violated the basic rights of the North Korean people for nearly two decades.

He's urging North Korea to close what he calls a "sad chapter in its history" and to work for peace. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

North Korea is no monarchy, of course, but one thing is certain: following the death of Kim Jong Il, his son Kim Jong Un, reportedly 27 or 28 years old, will become the country's leader.

- Kim Jong Il's death didn't come as a surprise for North Korea, and there have been succession plans in place since 2005.
- Kim Jong Un will take over, but he probably won't be the only leader. He may become more of a figurehead, with the National Defense Commission assuming more power than it had under his dad.
- While Kim Jong Un trains for his new job, his uncle Jang Song Thaek is predicted to act as the power behind the throne.
- Kim Jong Un may try to show his tough-guy credentials through international aggression.
- North Koreans have reason to rise up against the regime—but it's unlikely they will.

METRO WORLD NEWS

North Korea: what's next?
War, military coup and popular uprising: Potential scenarios
Kim Jong Un
Scenario 1
Becomes a tough guy
Scenario 2
No change
Kim Jong Un tries to reclaim power
Jang Song Thaek becomes back-seat leader
Scenario 3
Becomes figurehead
Refuses to co-operate with the IAEA
Attack on South Korea
Generals more powerful
Sunshine policy
Incentives from the international community
International attack on North Korea
South Korea retaliates
South Korea doesn't retaliate
North Korea remains an enigmatic country. With Kim Jong Un's succession to power, Metro takes a look at a few possible scenarios. Dear Leader's son may attack South Korea, or the military might take over.

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- Panorama Village
- Semiahmoo Shopping Centre
- Surrey Central City Mall

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- 1588 West Broadway
- 1008 West Georgia St.
- 2154 West 4th
- Capilano Mall
- Chinatown Plaza
- Lynn Valley Centre
- Oakridge Centre
- Pacific Centre
- Park Royal S.

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KELOWNA
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- Orchard Park Shopping Centre

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- Pine Centre

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News in brief

THE CANADIAN PRESS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

▶ Bob Barker

Bob Barker foots elephant bill

PRICE IS RIGHT. Former game show host Bob Barker will apparently cover the full cost of transporting three elephants from the Toronto Zoo to California.

In a statement, the PAWS organization says Barker will pay an unspecified amount to move Toka, Thika and Iringa to their new home.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Parents charged in sibling shooting

DELORAINE, MAN. The parents of a five-year-old boy who shot his younger sister on a farm in Manitoba are facing several charges, including criminal negligence and drug possession.

On Nov. 26, police went to a home and found a four-year-old girl had been shot just below the kidney — she has had surgery and is now recovering from her injuries.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Lack of snow has cows thirsty

REGINA. The SPCA in Saskatchewan is concerned about how a lack of snow is causing a shortage of drinking water for cows this winter as it's not uncommon for cows to go to pasture in winter to eat snow.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Curbing health spending

Federal Tories' new plan to cut back health-transfer payments leaves some provincial ministers visibly angry

GEOFF HOWE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

▶ Federal Finance Minister Jim Flaherty, centre, speaks to Bank of Canada Governor Mark Carney prior to a provincial, territorial and federal finance ministers meeting in Victoria on Monday.

There was little Christmas goodwill spirit Monday as a meeting between provincial and territorial finance ministers and their federal counterpart ended in angry words.

Provincial finance ministers said they were astonished after federal Finance Minister Jim Flaherty "imposed" a new plan for how health money will be transferred to the provinces.

Flaherty said health transfers will continue to flow at the same six-percent increase rate they have been, but by 2018, the increase will drop to be tied to the rate of nominal GDP, which is the measure of economic growth including inflation.

"It's no present at all," said Ontario Finance Minister Dwight Duncan.

"It's a lump of coal."

Duncan said his colleagues were all shocked at Ottawa's unilateral decision.

"He put the document in front of us and said this is how it's going to be."

Flaherty acknowledged there has "obviously" been some concern among provinces.

He said his provincial and territorial counterparts were briefed about Ottawa's plans at a dinner last night.

"We do need to talk about the way forward in terms of being fiscally responsible, not only at the federal level but across the country, all the governments," said Flaherty.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Transfer details

- Flaherty announced Monday new health spending investments of $178 billion over five years.
- He said even when transfers drop to be tied to the nominal GDP rate, Ottawa is guaranteeing provinces the funding will never dip below a three-per-cent increase.

Slain baseball players remembered

Students, staff and ordinary Islanders played catch outside a Charlottetown high school Monday in memory of two former students who were killed in a roadside shooting in Alberta last week.

Dozens of people donned ball gloves and tossed baseballs on a field outside Colonel Gray High School, the alma mater of Tanner Craswell, 22, and his friend Mitch MacLean, 20.

The two promising baseball players were killed Thursday along with Tabitha Stepple of Lethbridge, Alta.

Police said Stepple's former boyfriend, Derek Jensen, rammed the car they were in on a highway south of Calgary. He opened fire, killing the trio and wounding a fourth person in the car, 21-year-old Shayna Conway, also of Charlottetown. Jensen then killed himself.

Colonel Gray principal Kevin Whitrow said school staff and teachers who taught the two and knew them well have been deeply affected.

He said people were invited to play catch and do "whatever they feel like doing" during the unusual memorial to the former students. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

Funeral dates

- Funerals for the two men are planned for Thursday and Friday.

Royals.

▶ Prince William, Duke of Cambridge, Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge, and Prince Harry attend the Sun Military Awards at the Imperial War Museum in London on Monday.

ARTHUR EDWARDS/WPA POOL/GETTY IMAGES

Royals strut their stuff

Russia bans import of seal products: Activists

Animal-welfare activists say Russia has banned importing harp-seal products, which they say threatens the survival of the embattled Canadian sealing industry.

The International Fund for Animal Welfare says it has obtained documents from Russia and the World Trade Organization showing the ban went into effect in August. The group says Russia represents one of the largest buyers of Canadian seal products. The EU introduced its own trade ban in 2009.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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ACCUSED IN DEADLY ATTACKS

ICC rejects bid to halt Rwandan rebel's release

International Criminal Court judges refused Monday to block the release of a Rwandan rebel prosecutors accused of involvement in deadly attacks by a Hutu militia on villages in Congo in 2009.

The pre-trial judges ordered the release of Callixte Mbarushimana on Friday after dismissing all charges against him for lack of evidence. If he is freed, Mbarushimana would be the first suspect released from ICC custody since the court's inception in 2002.

Prosecutors had said they would appeal the ruling and asked the court to delay Mbarushimana's release pending the outcome of the appeal.

But in Monday's written decision, judges ruled that Mbarushimana can no longer be detained because the 11 charges against him have been dismissed.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Iran reformists will run in next election: Report

A report quotes Iran's former president as predicting pro-reform figures will run in the next election.

The report by the semi-official Mehr news agency Monday quoted Mohammad Khatami as saying reformists will not boycott the March 2012 parliamentary elections. Khatami has emerged as a leader of the reform movement.

Over the past months, many reformist leaders have said they will not run, reflecting deep dissatisfaction with the results of the 2009 election, when Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was re-elected president. Many opposition figures charged the election was rigged.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.S. blogger released after being arrested in Syria

Syrian authorities have released a U.S.-born blogger and press-freedom campaigner who was arrested at the border while on her way to attend a conference in Jordan.

Razan Ghazzawi was detained Dec. 4 and charged last week with fomenting sectarian strife and spreading false information through a secret organization.

15 The charges are punishable by up to 15 years in prison.

The Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression, where she worked, said in a statement Monday that Ghazzawi was freed Sunday night on bail.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tributes flow for 'moral voice' of Czech Republic

Vaclav Havel was a dissident playwright who peacefully brought down communism in homeland ◐ Ex-president remembered at home and abroad

Braving the freezing cold, thousands of Czechs bid a personal farewell Monday to former president Vaclav Havel, who led the peaceful revolution that toppled the communist regime in 1989.

The mourners waited patiently in a long line in front of the Prague Crossroads at the city's Old Town, where the coffin with Havel's body went on display Monday. Many were carrying flowers to honour Havel, who died Sunday at age 75.

The government announced that a three-day official mourning period will start Wednesday and said it will hold a state funeral, including a Mass, on Friday at the country's biggest and most famous church, St. Vitus Cathedral.

A private funeral for family members will follow at a crematory, Prague archbishop Dominik Duka said.

"One day I will share this experience with my children.... It would be great for them to have such a hero but I can't see anyone who could replace him now."

MOURNER ZUZANA HRONOVA

Prime Minister Petr Necas urged Czech citizens to observe a minute of silence at Friday noon and his government proposed a special law recognizing Havel's "contribution to freedom and democracy."

Havel had turned a former church into a space where he organized international conferences and met leaders of other countries, dissidents and friends from all around the globe after his final term in office ended in 2003.

"He was a hero for me since my childhood," said Zuzana Hronova, 32, who travelled to the capital from the city of Pardubice, 100 kilometres east of Prague.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

PETR DAVID JOSEK/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

▶ A woman lights a candle to commemorate the death of former Czech president Vaclav Havel at the Velvet Revolution memorial in downtown Prague on Sunday.

Around the world

- Havel aide Sabina Tancevova said U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton expressed her wish to attend the funeral.
- UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called Havel "the moral voice of his country and his era. His humanity, humility and decency were an example for us all."

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Egypt's ruling military lashes out at protesters

Ruling council defends use of force Leading political groups steer clear of latest unrest

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

An Egyptian man chants slogans during a protest in Cairo's Tahrir Square on Monday.

Egypt's ruling military questioned the morals of a female detainee, accused a prominent publisher of incitement and bashed the media for allegedly working to destabilize the country in a new effort Monday to crush the pro-democracy movement trying to oust the generals.

The criticism, delivered by a member of the ruling military council in a nationally televised news conference, came hours after troops in riot gear swept through Cairo's Tahrir Square, opening fire on protesters and lobbing tear gas into the crowds. At least three people were killed, pushing the death toll for four days of clashes to 14.

Violence has been raging in Cairo since Friday, when military forces guarding the Cabinet building near Tahrir Square heavily cracked down on a three-week-old sit-in to demand the ruling generals immediately hand power to a civilian authority. Tahrir was the centre of the uprising and remains the base of the democracy movement's ongoing protests.

The raid early Monday appeared to be an attempt by the military to keep protesters away from key government buildings near the square, including parliament, the Cabinet headquarters and the Interior Ministry, which is in charge of the hated police.

The protesters have decried the military's heavy-handed crackdown, with activists flooding social networking sites and other media with photos and video of troops beating and attacking protesters.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.S. officials caution online sperm donor

Trent Arsenault on Facebook

U.S. officials have warned a California man who has been donating cups of his sperm to women who want children.

Trent Arsenault tells the San Francisco Chronicle newspaper he's been donating sperm for five years to women he meets online.

He says he got three women pregnant last month, a record for the 36-year-old father of 14 — and counting.

Arsenault says he considered donating through sperm banks, which offer money and donor anonymity. But he decided to give it away in sterile cups so he could meet the future parents.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has told Arsenault he's facing a $100,000 fine or up to a year in prison for ignoring regulations requiring blood tests to screen for communicable diseases.

Arsenault, an engineer with Hewlett-Packard, started donating sperm in December 2006.

Before donating the sperm, Arsenault and the parents sign contracts that absolve him of any fathering rights or responsibilities.

In all, Arsenault has given 348 sperm donations to 46 women. But it's not the number of donations that the FDA has a problem with. In a letter to Arsenault in November 2010, the agency took issue with the safety of his sperm.

METRO/WITH FILES FROM THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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U.S. panda program gets $4.5M boost

Scientists want to try one more time to breed zoo pair before switching for new animals from China

The U.S. National Zoo in Washington received $4.5 million US on Monday to fund its giant panda reproduction program for five more years.

Philanthropist David M. Rubenstein visited the pandas with China's ambassador to the United States to announce the gift. Rubenstein is a co-founder of equity firm the Carlyle Group and is on the board of regents at the Smithsonian Institution, which oversees the zoo.

"There are probably 10-million species on the face of the earth, and I doubt that any one of those species is more popular and more beloved than the giant panda," Rubenstein said at a news conference by the zoo's giant panda yard. He said the money is a holiday gift to the people of Washington and to the country because pandas make people happy.

SUSAN WALSH/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

▶ Mei Xiang, the female giant panda at the U.S. National Zoo, has been trying for a baby for five years, biologists say.

"Hopefully this will result in more pandas being born here," he said.

The zoo said male panda Tian Tian has been showing early signs of breeding behaviour. But the zoo is securing frozen semen from a now-dead panda at the San Diego zoo to use as a backup next year. The zoo is also making changes to the panda habitat, such as eliminating artificial light at night to encourage natural breeding cycles that have come abnormally early for female panda Mei Xiang in years past.

David Wildt, a reproductive scientist, said chances of Mei Xiang having another cub may be slim because there have been five years of failed attempts to breed the panda couple.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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News in brief

KEVIN FRAYER/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Pilots to work through the holidays

NO STRIKE ... YET. The Air Canada Pilots Association says travellers do not have to worry about a strike over the busy Christmas season. The union group issued a statement to that effect. Pilots aren't in a legal strike position until mid-February, when they face a potential deadline.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Saab files for bankruptcy

TROLLHATTAN, SWEDEN. Saab Automobile filed for bankruptcy on Monday, giving up a desperate struggle to stay in business after previous owner General Motors Co. blocked takeover attempts by Chinese investors.

Saab CEO Victor Muller personally handed in the bankruptcy application to a court in southwestern Sweden, ending his two-year effort to revive the carmaker.

The Dutch entrepreneur told reporters he had to pull the plug after GM, which still owns some technology licences for Saab, rejected a last-ditch financing plan with a Chinese company.

While experts say Saab is likely to be chopped up and sold in parts, officials in the town of Trollhattan, where Saab employs more than 3,000 people, were holding out hope that a new buyer would emerge to salvage the brand.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Republicans balk at payroll tax cut

SENATE VS. HOUSE. The U.S. House of Representatives intends to vote down a two-month extension of a payroll tax cut for millions of Americans that cleared the Senate late last week, Speaker John Boehner said Monday. Without action by Congress, both the payroll tax cut and a program for long-term unemployment benefits will expire on Jan. 1.

It's the latest game of legislative brinksmanship between the Senate and the House. Economists have warned that the move could set back an already fragile economic recovery. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Phone-hacking routine: Whistleblower's brother

Tabloid journalists referred to the practice as 'the dark side' Scandal has spread to more British papers

CARL COURT/GETTY IMAGES

▶ Anti-Murdoch protesters rally in London.

Illegal voicemail interception and cellphone tracking was a matter of routine at both The Sun and the News of the World tabloids, the brother of a whistleblower at the centre of Britain's phone hacking scandal said Monday.

Stuart Hoare —brother of the late journalist Sean Hoare — told an inquiry into British media ethics that both papers, published by Rupert Murdoch's News International Ltd., broke the law as part of their "daily routine."

"The reality was that phone hacking was endemic within the News International group," Hoare said in a witness statement published on the inquiry's website.

"I know this to be the case because Sean and I regularly discussed this and there are emails in existence which support Sean's description of a practice referred to during such meetings as 'the dark side.'"

Sean Hoare was the first ex-News of the World journalist to publicly accuse his former editor Andy Coulson of being at the hub of a culture of wrongdoing at the paper, an allegation that helped ignite the scandal that forced Murdoch to close the British tabloid. Coulson is one of a dozen former News of the World journalists arrested in the scandal.

Sean Hoare, who suffered from a drinking problem, died in July just as the scandal was exploding.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dark doings

- **The phone-hacking** scandal has spread to The Sun, another Rupert Murdoch title and Britain's top-selling daily.
- **The late journalist Sean** Hoare said Sun reporters engaged in a practice dubbed "pinging," by which police were bribed to trace the location of people's cellphones.

Market moment

PRICES AS OF 5 P.M. MONDAY

TSX	Dollar	Oil	Natural gas	Gold
- 95.68 (11,539.7)	- 0.16¢ (96.27¢ US)	+ 35¢ US ($93.88 US)	$3.096 US (- 3¢ US)	$1,597.90 US (- $1.20 US)

OLI SCARFF/GETTY IMAGES

▶ Prince Alwaleed bin Talal bin Abdulaziz Alsaud and his wife, Princess Amira, arrive at The Savoy hotel in London last year.

Tweet deal as Saudi prince buys $300M stake in Twitter

Saudi billionaire Prince Alwaleed bin Talal and his investment firm, Kingdom Holding Co., are pouring $300 million into Twitter, Alwaleed announced on Monday.

The investment follows months of negotiations and will give the company a "strategic stake" in Twitter, though it wasn't clear how much the prince will control.

Alwaleed, a nephew of the Saudi king, has a history of investing in media and technology companies. He owns 95 per cent of KHC, which has major stakes in Citigroup Inc., Apple Inc. and Rupert Murdoch's News Corp.

His Twitter investment comes as Arab activists from Tunisia to Bahrain have flocked to Twitter to co-ordinate protests and voice their opposition to long-ruling autocratic regimes.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

"We believe that social media will fundamentally change the media industry landscape in the coming years. Twitter will capture and monetize this positive trend."

AHMED HALAWANI, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, KINGDOM HOLDING CO.

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YOUR PAST REARS ITS UGLY HEAD ON FACEBOOK

SHE SAYS ...

JESSICA NAPIER
METRO

Everybody hates change, especially us over-entitled Facebook users. Whenever the developers at the omnipresent social networking site make even the slightest tweaks, a large percentage of the 800 million active users become a seriously whiny bunch. And while modifications to privacy settings are a completely legitimate concern, you have to wonder if the digital uproar over every little page layout alteration is really all that necessary.

So when Mark (King of the Internet) Zuckerberg announced that Facebook would be overhauling the entire site and introducing its new Timeline feature, all kinds of Internet hell broke loose. The angry masses took to their keyboards to protest about the changes in fuming status updates, ironically using the very medium they're criticizing to complain about it. How very meta right? Somewhere, Marshall McLuhan is smiling.

Once upon a time, Facebook sold itself on connecting people, but the new feature (which finally launched worldwide last week) reveals what the site has really been about all along: vanity.

"And remember all of those lost photos from your fat years that were once buried in ancient albums? Well now they're just a click away!"

More visual and customizable, Timeline lets you play curator in a museum of your own digital history. The scrapbook-like interface means users can upload not one but TWO profile photos, enabling a more two-dimensional form of narcissism. So now you can post that here-I-am-drunk-at-a-bar-throwing-up-offensive-hand-gestures snapshot juxtaposed against a wide-angle photograph from your trip to Southeast Asia last year. All of which to prove to your friends that you might actually have some substance.

More importantly, Timeline's neatly organized yearly catalogue makes taking a walk down memory lane that much easier. Us early adopters (I've been sharing my own mundane personal details since November 2005), we can't resist the temptation to jump back and forth throughout the years, reliving our not-so-distant past through old conversations and tagged photos.

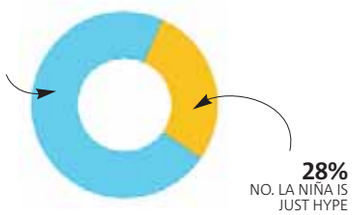
Remember when you signed all your wall posts with your name at the bottom because it was maybe kind of like an email? How silly. And remember all those lost photos from your fat years that were once buried in ancient albums? Well now they're just a click away!

Yes there's plenty to discover on Facebook in the age of Timeline. But before you publish your digital autobiography, you might want to take a moment to edit those posts from the years before you accepted your mom's friend request. After all, Facebook is the one place where life's most cringe-worthy moments can be deleted for good.

Read more of Jessica Napier's columns at metronews.ca/shesays

Register at metropolitanpanel.ca and take the quick poll

Are you ready for the messy, unpredictable and stormy winter that meteorologists are calling for?



Local tweets

- **@NHLhistory-girl:** On this date in 1999, #Isles traded Felix Potvin to #Canucks for Bill Muckalt, @KevinWeekes and Dave Scatchard.
- **@reidder:** No Koivu or Setoguchi for the Wild but they get Pierre-Marc Bouchard back from a broken nose. Nicolas Backstrom starts against Luongo.
- **@CayKing:** How many fingers has Rome broken? Time for AA & Sulzer to step up. Wild are depleted without Koviu and Seto. Need to take advantage #canucks
- **@DowntownCharles:** @VancouverPD Congrats on submitting more charges against individuals suspected of being involved in June 15 riot. #vancouver
- **@ellenwoodsworth:** Flaherty thinks the Feds can't afford to pay more for health care! Where did the Conservatives find the $95 billion plus for defense ? #fb
- **@DylanMacDermid:** the whole "Watch the Throne" Vancouver concert on Youtube? there's no better way to spend another 3 hours.

PHOTO CHALLENGE WINNERS

The winners of the 2011 Metro Global Photo Challenge have been chosen One of this year's winners lives in Montreal

Metro is proud to present the winners of the 2011 Metro Global Photo Challenge. After 162,000 submissions from thousands of photo enthusiasts, Metro readers and a star-studded jury have selected their top four.

The winning entrants each earn a trip worth roughly $1,300 to any of 100 cities where Metro is published. METRO WORLD NEWS

MOMENTS OF MY LIFE WINNER: THE MAGIC LANE

Metro spoke with music-management student Pierre-Philippe Kikhounga, 26, who is from Paris but lives in Montreal.

Tell us about your winning photo.

It was a sunny day in Parisian district Etienne Marcel. Moments before I took this shot, I was thinking to myself how lucky it is for a photo lover to roam the streets of Paris. All of a sudden, I heard children playing, went around the corner, saw the children having fun, got on my knees and quickly shot the photo.

The prize is a trip to any Metro city in the world. Where do you plan to go?

I will probably choose a city in Latin America: Brazil, Mexico or Chile.

What's your secret tip in capturing the perfect picture?

For me, there is no such thing as a perfect picture — only a perfect moment and a perfect time. The only tip I can give is don't see but watch.

PIERRE-PHILIPPE KIKHOUNGA

"This image takes us all back to that childlike freedom when none of us had a care or worry in the world. A delightful reminder of the joys of youth. You can almost hear their cheers!"
JURY CHAIRMAN NIGEL BARKER

For a complete list of Metro Global Photo Challenge winners, scan the code.

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Best and worst of 2011

Before we get carried away with promising new movies of 2012, let's take a moment to remember 2011 in film Here's Metro's picks of the best and worst the year had to offer

NED EHRBAR
SCENE@METRONEWS.CA
METRO WORLD NEWS IN HOLLYWOOD

HANDOUT

▶ Is Shame one of the best movies of 2011? The story of a sex addict succeeds in its honesty.

The Best

1. Hugo
Whether in 3D or not, Martin Scorsese's tribute to childhood and the early days of cinema dazzles and enchants — thanks in no small part to newcomer Asa Butterfield as the titular orphan keeping the clocks in a Paris train station running.

2. Shame
All nudity jokes aside, Michael Fassbender turns in one of the most powerful performances of the year as man feeding his sex addiction while trying to keep the rest of life at arm's length. A bummer of a film, to be sure, but it's a more honest and unflinching look at life than audiences have seen in a long time.

3. Beginners
A sweet and crafty film, Mike Mills' semi-autobiographical tale about a man (Ewan McGregor) dealing with his 75-year-old father (Christopher Plummer) coming out of the closet is quite simply a thing of beauty.

4. Like Crazy
Fair warning: This film is trying to break your heart — and it succeeds, thanks to frank and risky improvised performances by Felicity Jones and Anton Yelchin as young lovers who make stupid but whole believable decisions for the sake of love. Quietly devastating.

5. Weekend
A startling debut from British filmmaker Andrew Haigh that chronicles the meeting and subsequent three-day romance of two men in elegant, true-to-life frankness.

The Worst

1. J. Edgar
There were arguably worse films this year — just check further down this list — but Clint Eastwood's simultaneously too subtle and clumsily loud biopic fails more spectacularly than the rest. Given the Oscar-winning talent involved, the artless melodrama of J. Edgar is particularly startling.

HANDOUT

▶ J. Edgar's star power couldn't save the clumsy biopic from crashing.

2. Waiting for Forever
It's not nice to pick on smaller films, but this indie gem was so egregious it demands mention. Its greatest offence? Playing stalking and mental illness off as cute rom-com behaviour.

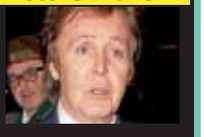
3. New Year's Eve
A romantic comedy Death Star that can't hide its cynicism, the movie did manage to sneak in Sarah Jessica Parker being introduced by the sound of horse hooves, so it's not a total loss.

4. Larry Crowne
A completely tone-deaf and sexless romantic comedy, featuring Tom Hanks and Julia Roberts doing their best approximation of "everyday people" — and showing just how out of touch they are.

5. The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn — Part 1
Criticizing the Twilight franchise is a futile enterprise, of course, but this latest entry — half a book stretched out far longer than the story can support — brings something new to the series' list of offences: It's unbearably boring. Also, no title should need that much punctuation.

2 scene

Scene in brief



Paul McCartney is releasing an album of standards — plus two new songs of his own. The former Beatle announced Monday that his new disc will be out on Feb. 7. It doesn't have a title yet but he's already streaming one song, My Valentine, on his website.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jamie Bell says actors' performances lend heart and soul to tech-heavy Tintin

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Jeremy Renner gets some action

The actor famous for The Hurt Locker channels his inner action hero in MI4 Too bad he's scared of heights

JÉRÔME VERMELIN
SCENE@METRONEWS.CA

After Oscar nominations for the dramas The Hurt Locker and The Town, actor Jeremy Renner did what any self-respecting Californian would do: Take roles where he could blow stuff up in big-time action movies. Besides this week's Mission: Impossible — Ghost Protocol, opposite Tom Cruise, he's got next year's Hansel and Gretel: Witch Hunters, plays Hawkman in The Avengers and takes over for Matt Damon (as a new character) in The Bourne Supremacy. "Suddenly, the offers came streaming in," he says of his life, post Academy Awards. In Mission: Impossible 4, he plays Brandt, an analyst for the Ministry of Defense who joins Tom Cruise's Ethan Hunt in order to put a stop to the elaborate plans of a terrorist. "The action is ongoing, but I wanted my character to be credible," insists the actor.

Renner is also full of praise for Cruise, his co-star in the movie. "Sometimes he came across like this super experienced guy, paying attention to every single thing happening on set. Other times, he would be like a teenager ... ready to take on the craziest of stunts."

Opens Wednesday

Mission: Impossible — Ghost Protocol opened in IMAX theatres last Friday. It will open everywhere else Wednesday.

HANDOUT

▶ Jeremy Renner stars alongside Tom Cruise in Mission: Impossible — Ghost Protocol.

Movie reviews

The Girl With The Dragon Tattoo
Genre: Drama
Director: David Fincher
Stars: Daniel Craig, Rooney Mara, Stellan Skarsgard
●●●●½

Sweden and director David Fincher were apparently made for each other. In the English-language version of the Girl with the Dragon Tattoo, Fincher certainly makes the most of his stark locations, with the wintry scenes almost in black and white. The man just knows how to move a camera. The real reason to see the film, though, is Rooney Mara as rough-edged computer hacker and ward of the state Lisbeth Salander. She stalks the frame, hitting both self-assured power and self-doubting vulnerability naturally. Her counterpart, Daniel Craig as disgraced journalist Mikael Blomkvist, impresses as well as a very un-Bond not-so-super sleuth.

NED EHRBAR

Showtimes

- **FIFTH AVENUE CINEMAS:** (18A) Wed-Thu 3:15-6:30-9:45
- **SCOTIABANK THEATRE VANCOUVER:** (18A) No Passes Tue 7:30-10:25-10:55 No Passes Wed-Thu 12-12:30-3:30-4-7-7:30-10:25-10:55
- **ESPLANADE 6:** (18A) No Passes Tue 7:15 No Passes Wed 12:30-4-7:20
- **SILVERCITY RIVERPORT:** (18A) No Passes Tue 7-10:30 No Passes Wed-Thu 11:30-3:15-7-10:30 No Passes Tue 7:15-10:45 No Passes Wed-Thu 11-2:45-6:30-10
- **SILVERCITY METROPOLIS:** (18A) Tue 7:30-10:55 Wed-Thu 12:30-4-7:30-10:55
- **SILVERCITY COQUITLAM:** (18A) Tue 7:30-10:55 Wed-Thu 12:30-4-6:45-7:30-10:10-10:55 Tue 8:45 Wed-Thu 1:15-5-8:45
- **STRAWBERRY HILL GRANDE:** (18A) Tue 7-10:30 Wed-Thu 12:20-3:50-7:20-10:50
- **STUDIO 12 GUILDFORD:** (18A), Tue 8, Wed-Thu 1-4:30-8
- **RIALTO:** (18A) Wed-Thu 7:30
- **COLOSSUS LANGLEY:** (18A) Tue 7:30-10:55 Wed-Thu 11:30-12-3:10-3:40-6:50-7:25-10:30-10:55 Tue 7-10:30

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DVD Releases

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Midnight in Paris
Genre: Comedy
Director: Woody Allen
Stars: Owen Wilson, Rachel McAdams, Kathy Bates

In Woody Allen's Midnight in Paris, the City of Lights is a leading lady, shot with reverence by cinematographers Darius Khondji and Johanne Debas who depict it with the rapture of lovers. But don't think this film is merely a delicious travelogue. Allen is musing on the folly of nostalgia, which seduces us with the thought that life must have been better in the past.

It's an affliction that has struck Gil (Owen Wilson) hard. He's a successful Hollywood screenwriter who would rather pen novels, and yearns for the romance of Paris in the 1920s, the Jazz Age, when he presumes the words flowed as easily as champagne.

Gil finds himself in Paris with his fiancée, Inez (Rachel McAdams), and her wealthy, shallow parents. Faced with another boring evening with Inez and her pretentious friends, Gil begs off to go for a walk.

Wandering off his intended path, Gil finds himself somewhat lost just as a nearby clock strikes 12 and a vintage Peugeot rolls up to the curb. Its passengers beckon Gil to join them.

Surprisingly, perhaps, Wilson handles the role of the adventurous Gil handily and believably. Magical and dreamy, Midnight in Paris will take you on a trip you didn't bargain for.

PETER HOWELL

Margin Call
Genre: Drama
Director: J.C. Chandor

Stars: Zachary Quinto, Stanley Tucci, Kevin Spacey

You don't have to understand the niceties of asset-backed commercial paper to enjoy the boardroom thriller Margin Call, the fast-moving feature debut from writer/director J.C. Chandor. Set over two tense days and one very long night at a Wall Street investment firm very like the late Lehman Brothers, Margin Call is a realistic take on what happens when high-flying money speculators suddenly hit ground.

Director Chandor made the right decision focusing his lens on the people — not the numbers — of the financial crisis. This is a Greek tragedy wearing pinstripes.

PETER HOWELL

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At least Courtney's house was Pretty on the Inside

Rocker evicted as owner finds hand-painted walls ruined, among other things

After damaging the decor in her $27,000 a month New York City townhouse, Courtney Love has been evicted, according to the New York Post.

"I was horrified by what she had done. The walls that had been hand-painted and glazed were ruined, covered in damask wallpaper and ice-blue paint," the owner, Donna Lyon, says of Love, who is reportedly two months behind on rent as well.

And that's after starting a fire in the master bedroom in June.

"I got a call from her accountant, who said, 'Miss Love is fine,' which I was glad to hear," Lyon says. "But I thought, 'What about the house?'"

METRO

ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Courtney Love

Celebrity tweets

@piersmorgan

Not a great year for tyrants... BinLaden, Gadhafi, now Kim Jong-il

@Joan_Rivers

The recipe for Christmas goose is the same as Hanukkah goose. The difference is we let the housekeeper cook it.

@HowardStern

Can't find a newspaper.

@BetteMidler

Yes many things are horrible, but how about ingrown toenails? Mommmeeeeee!!!!!!!

He's no Belieber in old Saint Nick

Justin Bieber never believed in Santa Claus.

"My mom always told me there wasn't a Santa," the pop star tells AOL Music.

"This was her logic: She thought if I grew up knowing about Santa then finding out he wasn't real, that it would be like she was lying to me. And then when she told me about God, I maybe wouldn't believe her."

Luckily, it was a tidbit that Bieber was good enough to keep to himself.

"I didn't tell my friends or rain it for anyone," he says. "I was a good kid."

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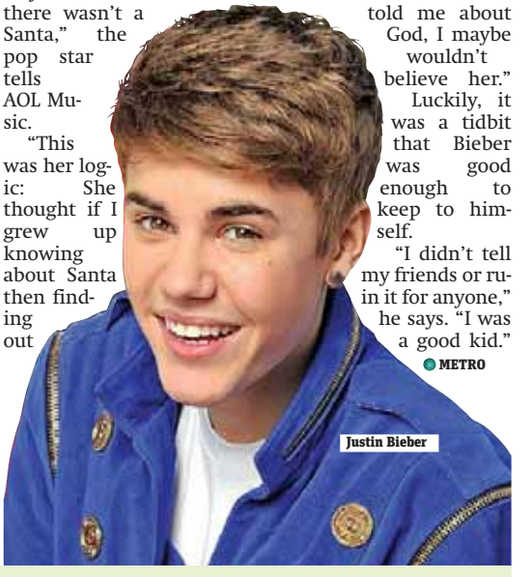

Justin Bieber

Ellen DeGeneres

Ellen moves in to Pitt's home

Brad Pitt didn't have to look far to find a buyer for his Malibu mansion: Ellen DeGeneres and Portia de Rossi snatched up the $12-million property with private beach access this month, according to Us Weekly.

"It was a quick transaction and Brad's stuff is already out," a source says.

"Ellen and Portia would like to start using the house immediately."

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Lohan a hot commodity again

For the first time in a long while, Lindsay Lohan has a bona fide hit on her hands.

Retailers are reportedly having trouble keeping copies of her issue of Playboy in stock, according to TMZ.

There also has been a surge of online subscribers to the magazine's website since the release of the troubled actress' naked pictorial.

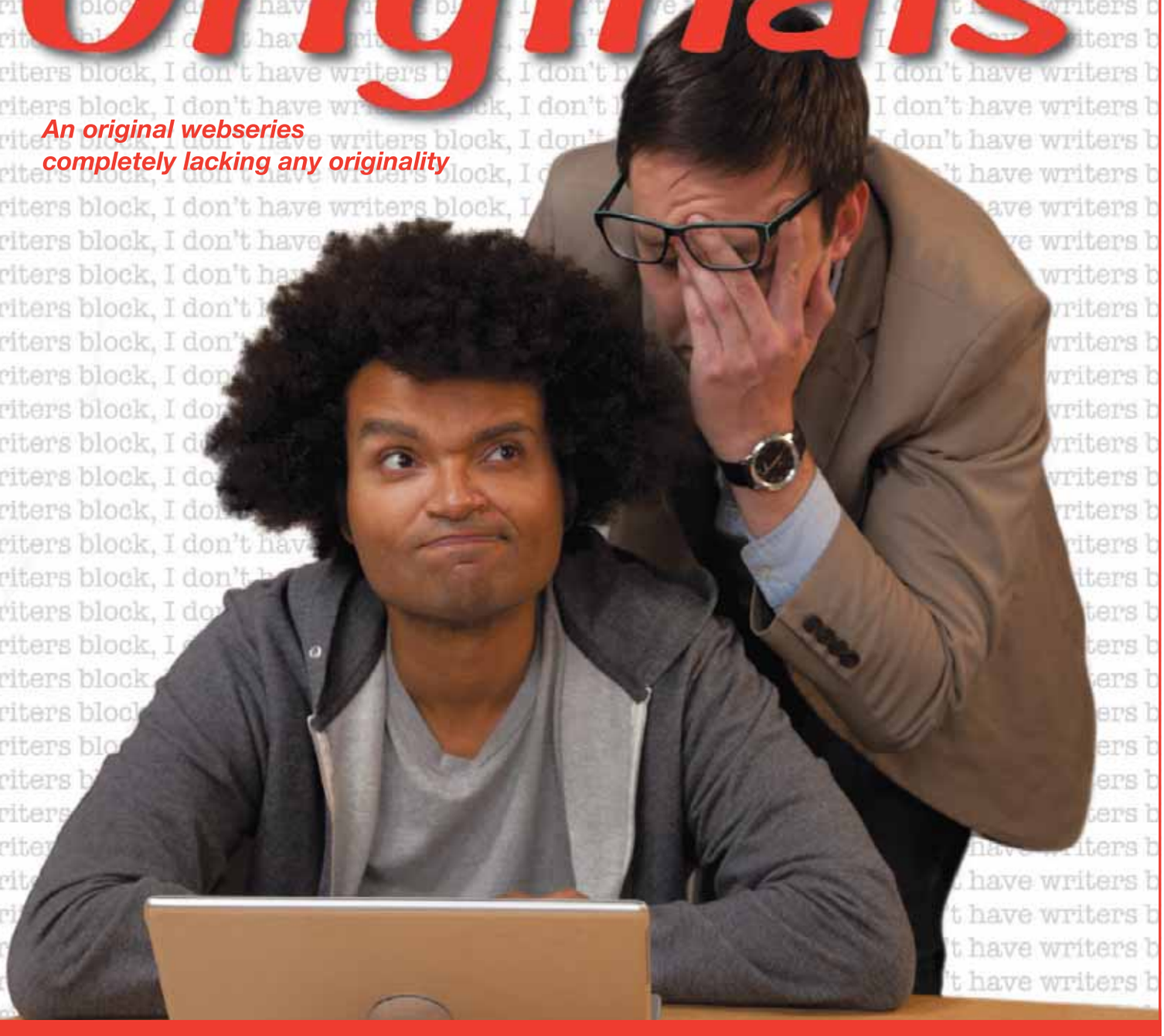
METRO

Lindsay Lohan

From a writer of "The Office"...

Originals

An original webseries completely lacking any originality



In today's episode... "Smarty Pants"

The clock is ticking down to their big meeting with the TV Network. And just when it seems all hope is lost, Bryce comes face-to-face with the woman that could change everything, while Marsha is planning on coming face-to-face with Jason. Literally.

New episodes post every Tuesday and Thursday. Watch at www.facebook.com/OriginalsTheSeries

3 life

Don't fear the feast

The holidays can do some serious damage to your waistline But with some careful plans you can still enjoy the fun without suffering the New Year's hangover Read up and dig in

CELIA MILNE
LIFE@METRONEWS.CA

There are so many temptations at this time of year.

Whether it's the treats that constantly seem to be on offer at work, the huge family dinners, or junk food to accompany a movie, the holidays are famous for luring us into eating and drinking too much.

Eggnog, shortbread, gravy, and plenty of booze — beware.

The good news, according to Kim Arrey, a dietitian and nutrition coach in Montreal, is that, with a little advance planning and careful choosing, you can indulge without too much guilt.

She estimates that the average weight gain during the holidays is three to five pounds.

"When faced with so many opportunities to consume foods that contain more fat, more salt or more sugar, and may be less nutrient dense than usual, many people are overwhelmed. Since many of these goodies are only offered up once a year, the option is clear — eat the goodies."

Arrey recommends you accept that there will be temptations, and choose between them. For example, skip the eggnog but have one dessert, if dessert is your thing.

Holiday tips

Here are Arrey's tips for navigating the holiday season:

- **Slow down** Enjoy all aspects of your meal — savour the taste and texture of your food and the conversation going on around you.
- **Stay the course** Eat your favourite foods, and drop the ones you eat just because they are there. "Plum pudding only comes around once a year, so if you enjoy it, leave room for it by not eating the mashed potatoes. Why waste calories on foods you do not like?" says Arrey.
- **Snack** Eat a snack between meals. This helps you eat smaller amounts at meals. Try a source of protein, such as nuts or cheese, along with fruit or vegetables and dip.
- **Rule** When putting food on your plate, remember the one-quarter, one-half, one-quarter diagram: Try to fill half of your plate with vegetables and only one-quarter of the plate with grains or potatoes and one-quarter of the plate with meat and alternatives. "Unless they are drowning in butter or sauce, vegetables are a great way to include great taste, nutrients and not too many calories."

ISTOCK PHOTOS

▶ You can still enjoy the seasonal foods and not hurt your waistline.

Skin-care picks

These body balms are perfect for rejuvenating parched, sullen skin during the colder months.

L'Occitane Almond firming and beautifying milk veil
Contains micro pearls to pep up your complexion.

L'OCCITANE
$33
loccitane.com

Biotherm Nutri replenishing body treatment for dry skin
Omega 3, apricot and musk rose oil enriched formula repairs flaky skin.

BIOTHERM
$38
biotherm.com

MP tables proposal to post warnings, ban use of tanning beds by under-18s

Best Health Minute

BONNIE MUNDAY, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, BEST HEALTH MAGAZINE

Spice of the season

The aromas and flavours of spices signal the holiday season – and they're good for you. Our senior editor Margaret Nearing rounded up some of the latest studies for the December issue of Best Health.

Nutmeg
It's long been known as an aphrodisiac, though the evidence has largely been anecdotal.

Now scientists at the University of Guelph have reviewed the research showing nutmeg increased sexual activity in animals.

Why not sprinkle a little extra on your eggnog?

Cardamom
It's a source of manganese, and a U.S. study found that women who ate high amounts of manganese each day had fewer PMS symptoms than those who ate the least. Add a generous sprinkle to your morning coffee or tea.

Cloves
These are one of the best sources of antioxidants, the compounds that help fight off disease-causing free radicals in our bodies.

Next time you make rice, add a few cloves to the cooking pot.

Cinnamon
A study shows that a whiff of cinnamon, or chewing cinnamon gum, stimulated the cognitive process and improved scores in working memory and visual-motor response speed.

Sprinkle cinnamon on your morning cereal.

Ginger
It has long been used to soothe upset stomachs.

Now, Toronto researchers recommend ginger as a "safe, effective and inexpensive solution" for nausea and vomiting due to pregnancy. (But check with your doctor first.)

Ginger makes a great addition to any rub for roasted meats.

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Compliments to the chef: Dale MacKay unites bar & gourmet

Ensemble Tap, new concept from Canada's Top Chef, serves upscale bar food

LUNCH RUSH

ERIN IRELAND
FOOD@METRONEWS.CA

ERIN IRELAND

Chicken Burger ($14).

At first glance, one might mistake it for a regular pub. Wings, nachos, and calamari — the usual appy suspects — top the menu.

With 15 micro-brews on tap, Dale MacKay's new second concept is, in every respect, a sports bar.

To expect the familiar would be ignorant, however, with Canada's Top Chef at the reigns. Ensemble Tap will no doubt attract throngs of non-sports fans when word of its unprecedented bar food gets out (if it hasn't already).

While toiling over the menu, several staff members suggested the Chicken Burger — McKay's gourmet take on his favourite drive-thru item: the McChicken Sandwich. Immediately intrigued, I obliged.

Like the mass-produced original, Tap's includes shredded lettuce and breaded chicken. Similarities end here. Killer smoky paprika mayo, crushed avocado, and crispy bacon — a triple threat — lay between Terra Breads' dense focaccia.

I was 'lovin' it' so much, that this sandwich lands on my Best of 2011 Lunch Rush list.

Ensemble Tap
990 Smithe St.
604-566-9770
ensembletap.com
Reservations: Yes (8+ guests)
Licensed: Yes
Quick solo lunch: Yes
Social lunch: Yes
Client negotiations: Yes
Co-worker lunch: Yes
Price range: $12 - $18
Rating: 4.5 out of 5

MATTHEW MEAD/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cinnamon Bun Bread Pudding

Preparation:

1. Coat a 3 L (9-by-13-inch) baking dish with cooking spray.
2. In a blender, combine eggs, cream, 5 ml (1 tsp) of the ground cinnamon and salt; puree until smooth. Set aside.
3. Cut each cinnamon bun into 2.5- to 5-cm (1- to 2-inch) chunks. Arrange chunks in even layer in prepared baking dish. Pour egg mix over pieces of cinnamon buns. As you pour, use fork to press on bun pieces to help them absorb liquid.
4. Bake in 180 C (350 F) oven 25 to 30 mins. or until lightly puffed and starting to brown. Let cool 15 to 20 mins. Meanwhile, in a bowl, whisk together icing sugar, water, vanilla and remaining cinnamon. Drizzle bread pudding with glaze, then cut it into 12 squares. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS/ ADAPTED BY EMILY RICHARDS

Ingredients:

- 6 eggs
- 375 ml (1 1/2 cups) 5 % light cream or milk
- 10 ml (2 tsp) cinnamon
- Pinch salt
- 12 large glazed cinnamon buns
- 250 ml (1 cup) icing sugar
- 22 ml (1 1/2 tbsp) water
- 5 ml (1 tsp) vanilla extract

Stovetop ham frees up oven

Simmer the meat in a broth that allows the flavours to seep deeper

MATTHEW MEAD/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Stovetop Ham with Dijon-Apple Glaze

This ham serves 12.

Preparation:

1. Using mortar and pestle or resealable bag and meat mallet, combine and lightly crush cloves, fennel, cumin, coriander.
2. In large stock pot heat oil over medium-high. Add seeds, onions and garlic. Cook 5 mins. or until onions begin to brown. Add wine, orange juice, lemon juice, Worcestershire sauce and oregano. Place ham in pot; fill with water to cover.
3. Bring to boil, then reduce to a simmer. Cover and simmer for 2 hours.
4. Line a baking sheet with foil and place a roasting rack over foil. Remove ham from pot and place on rack.
5. Glaze: In bowl, whisk mustard and apple jelly, then brush over surface of ham. Roast in 230 C (450 F) oven 25 mins. or until glaze is bubbly. Let ham rest in a warm place for 20 minutes before slicing.

ADAPTED BY EMILY RICHARDS, PROFESSIONAL HOME ECONOMIST, COOKBOOK AUTHOR AND TV CHEF. (EMILYRICHARDSCOOKS.CA)/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ingredients:

- 15 ml (1 tbsp) whole cloves
- 5 ml (1 tsp) fennel seeds
- 5 ml (1 tsp) cumin seeds
- 15 ml (1 tbsp) coriander seeds
- 15 ml (1 tbsp) canola oil
- 2 onions, quartered
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 250 ml (1 cup) white wine
- 250 ml (1 cup) orange juice
- 50 ml (1/4 cup) lemon juice
- 50 ml (1/4 cup) Worcestershire sauce
- 30 ml (2 tbsp) dried oregano
- 1 bone-in ham (3.175 to 3.5 kg/7 to 8 lb)
- Glaze
- 125 ml (1/2 cup) Dijon mustard
- 125 ml (1/2 cup) apple jelly

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Holiday Inn

FA-LA-LA-LA-AAAAHH

FUN AND FRUGAL

LESLEY SCORGIE
MONEY@METRONEWS.CA

Happy holidays fun and frugal readers!

Have you been avoiding bringing in the mail? Did you stash that dreaded credit card bill in a 'don't look now' drawer? Most Canadian households have wreaked major havoc on their credit cards this holiday season.

Starting now, you need a plan to pay off your credit card debt as fast as possible so as to avoid massive interest charges in the new year.

The best way to deal with holiday credit card debt is to get organized. Figure out who you owe money to, how much and the interest rate. Next, scrounge up an extra $10 or $20 per week and pay a little extra on the highest interest credit and store card bills.

By making extra payments as often as you can, you're tackling the principle portion of the debt more often which translates into less interest being accumulated. If you're stumped on where to find an extra $20; cut back on cellphone plans or coffees and sell unwanted household items on Kijiji.

If you've got multiple credit card balances you can also save money by consolidating them into a small loan with a fixed term and repayment plan. Though interest rates and payment flexibility are tempting, do not use credit lines as a pseudo-consolidation loan.

A debt-free lifestyle translates into way less stress. So, make it your New Year's resolution to pay off expensive consumer debt as quickly as possible.

FOR LESLEY SCORGIE'S FULL COLUMN VISIT METRONEWS.CA

Beware online fraudsters

ON MONEY

ALISON GRIFFITHS
MONEY@METRONEWS.CA

In this season of joy and giving and shopping who wants to think about getting ripped off?

But in this era of cyber predators we must take as much care with information as you would with your wallet in a place frequented by pickpockets.

The Financial Consumer Agency of Canada (fcac.gc.ca) urges everyone to be a little extra vigilant during the holidays, since we are often rushed and trying to do two things at once.

Justin Hwang, associate vice president of Fraud Management at TD Canada Trust, says that bogus websites can easily snare the unwary. He notes that website addresses beginning with https:// are usually secure. But if you update your antivirus software regularly you'll be alerted to the phony ones.

With so much shopping going on at this time of year you should also take a glance at your credit card and bank statements more often than normal to catch any unauthorized activity.

When you are short of time it's tempting to hand over your credit or debit card to a child to make certain purchases for you.

Aside from the fact that such use violates your contract with the bank, even the most responsible kids don't necessarily understand the importance of being vigilant about fraud.

But, of course, many youngsters these days have their own debit cards and may be authorized users on a parental card.

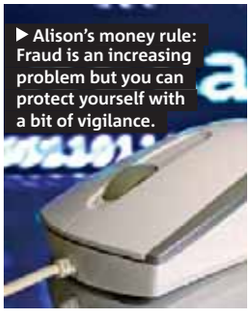
Watch them as they use these cards and coach them about ensuring their card is always close at hand.

They shouldn't put it on the cashier's counter where others in line can see it. And keeping their PIN one giant secret is vital. I recommend kids change their PIN every six months or so.

Have a wonderful and secure holiday.

ALISON GRIFFITHS IS THE AUTHOR OF THE UPCOMING BOOK COUNT ON YOURSELF: TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR MONEY. REACH HER AT ALISONGRIFFITHS.CA OR GRIFFITHS.ALISON@GMAIL.COM.

ISTOCK



▶ Alison's money rule: Fraud is an increasing problem but you can protect yourself with a bit of vigilance.

Cyber crooks

Here are a few ways to protect yourself. Be sure to share these tips with your children as they are the fastest growing group of online consumers.

- Don't shop online using public or unsecured wireless Internet.
- Be cautious about sharing too much information on social networking sites.
- Be sure you know a site is secure before entering personal information.
- Use virus or spyware protection software and update it regularly.
- Avoid using the automatic password or personal information log in function on your computer.
- Don't use Wi-Fi hotspots to log into your social networking pages.

MANNERS TAKE TIME, PRACTICE

CHARLES THE BUTLER

ASKCHARLES THEBUTLER@ METRONEWS.CA

FOR MORE, VISIT CHARLES MACPHERSON.COM

What is appropriate to expect from children with regards to table manners and etiquette? Myself, I always taught my children well, but I am appalled at the lack of manners of so many children these days.
Sticky for Manners

Dear Sticky for Manners,

Well, the world has changed and children's manners aren't what they used to be. One of every parent's nightmares is taking their children in public and being embarrassed from their lack of social skills. So lets review what is appropriate social behaviour.

Children should be taught manners and social skills from a very young age. As soon as they are able to start to reason and understand verbal language you can start with a simple please and thank you.

Once children start to get older (five to eight), learning table manners becomes important.

Understanding how to correctly use a knife and fork at the table, how to leave the table, drink from a glass, etc.

Now for those parents who think you can do this the night before a family event, that is where you are going wrong; turning these skills into everyday habits is the objective.

Some of the reasons you need to practice this at the family kitchen table every night are because:

1. You must practice a new skill for 21 days to start a pattern.

2. It takes 100 days for this new pattern to become automatic.

This is why you must begin and practice manners daily at home. Remember, good manners are not just for when you have guests or are entertaining; manners are to be applied everyday amongst family members, friends and work.

HAVE A QUESTION? EMAIL CHARLES AT ASKCHARLESTHEBUTLER@METRONEWS.CA.

ISTOCK

▶ Make sure your kids display proper manners at the table this Christmas.

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4 sports

Sports in brief

Boone Jenner, Mark Stone and Brendan Gallagher scored for the Canadian junior men's hockey team in a 3-1 win over Finland in Monday's exhibition game.

Finland will be Canada's first opponent when the 2012 world junior hockey championship opens Sunday in Edmonton and Calgary.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

JONATHAN HAYWARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

▶ Canucks right-winger Alex Burrows, left, lifts a shot past Wild goaltender Niklas Backstrom as Henrik and Daniel Sedin circle the Minnesota net.

Luongo looking dominant once again

Canucks goalie posts sixth win in seven games after early season struggles

Roberto Luongo earned his first shutout of the season as the Vancouver Canucks blanked the Minnesota Wild 4-0 on Monday night.

Henrik Sedin scored a goal and added two assists, and his twin brother Daniel added three helpers as the Canucks (20-11-2) posted their second straight win and 11th in 14 games.

The second-overall Wild (20-9-5) are off to their best start in franchise history, but suffered a fourth straight loss.

Luongo recorded 33 saves, while Henrik Sedin extended his points streak to three games.

Luongo registered his first outright shutout of the season after sharing a team shutout Dec. 9 against Colorado, when he left early with a throat injury.

Ryan Kesler, Alex Burrows and Jannik Hansen also scored for the Canucks.

CANUCKS	WILD
4	0

Despite missing five key forwards to injury, the Wild controlled most of the play in the first period while outshooting the Canucks 13-9. But Vancouver held a 1-0 lead after 20 minutes and then built its lead to 3-0 after the second.

Luongo was tested early as a Dany Heatley deflection slid just wide of the post 10:30 into the game and a Pierre-Marc Bouchard slapshot required a difficult save.

Henrik Sedin opened the scoring on a power play at 18:52 of the first as he fired off a cross-ice pass from his twin brother Daniel.

Minnesota goaltender Niklas Backstrom got a piece of the puck, but it trickled through his legs. The goal came exactly a minute after Wild winger Colton Gillies was penalized for hooking.

The goal came after Vancouver defenceman Alex Edler made a great play at the other end of the ice, racing back to check Matt Cullen as he rushed alone toward the Vancouver net with the puck.

Kesler put the Canucks ahead 2-0 on another power play midway through the second period. He fired in Daniel Sedin's pass from behind the net as the Swede waited patiently before sneaking a puck through to Kesler on the edge of the crease.

Burrows gave the Canucks a 3-0 advantage with just over two minutes left in the second. He put in Daniel Sedin's pass from the side of the net, culminating a three-way passing play with the twins.

Luongo preserved his shutout with just under four minutes left in the game as he stopped a Colton Gillies backhand following a giveaway deep in the Vancouver end. Moments later, Hansen closed out the scoring.

The Wild suffered their ninth straight loss in Vancouver since last winning Jan. 31, 2009. Minnesota has gone 0-7-2 at Rogers Arena since then.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Rangers win the Darvish derby

The Texas Rangers have submitted the winning bid for Yu Darvish, earning the right to negotiate a contract with the Japanese pitcher.

Major League Baseball announced Monday night that the Hokkaido Nippon Ham Fighters of Japan's Pacific League informed the U.S. commissioner's office that they have accepted the top bid for Darvish.

The Rangers, who have won the past two AL pennants, now have 30 days to sign Darvish to a contract. The 25-year-old right-hander is considered the best pitcher in Japan and several of baseball's biggest spenders were thought to be interested in him.

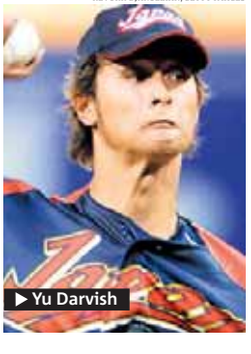
"The Texas Rangers are pleased and excited to have acquired the rights to negotiate with Yu Darvish. Our organization has scouted Mr. Darvish for the last several years and has been very impressed with his abilities and accomplishments. We believe he would be a great addition to the Texas Rangers pitching staff," the Rangers said in a statement. "We look forward to beginning the next step of this process in the very near future with Mr. Darvish and his representatives."

Bidding for the posting fee closed last Wednesday, and the Ham Fighters had until 5 p.m. ET on Tuesday to accept.

The posting fee will be paid only if an agreement is reached with Darvish's agents, Arn Tellem and Don Nomura.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

KEVORK DJANSEZIAN/GETTY IMAGES



▶ Yu Darvish

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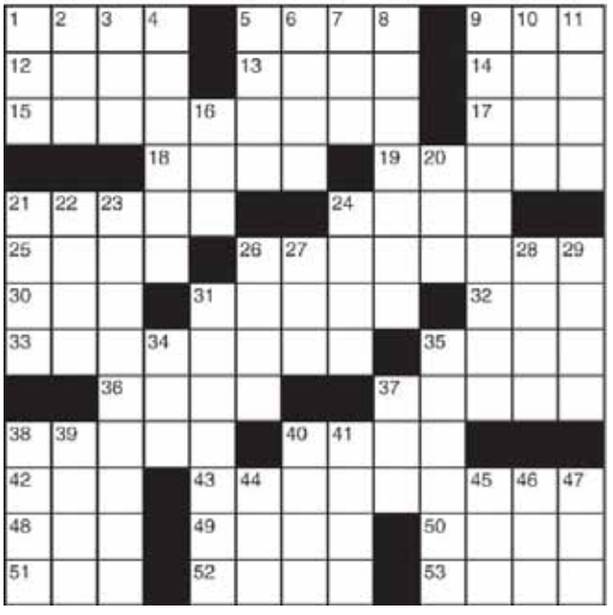
Crossword



Across

1 Grand tale
5 Advantage
9 Dine
12 Isinglass
13 Abound
14 Paid athlete
15 Dramatic public display
17 Id counterpart
18 Conversation
19 Indy car, e.g.
21 Fill the tank
24 Neighbour of Java
25 Tears
26 T-bars, e.g.
30 Citric beverage
31 Beg
32 A Gershwin brother
33 Parts of Sunday's newspaper
35 God (Lat.)
36 Actress Skye
37 Factions
38 Greedy kid's demand
40 Dalai —
42 Praise in verse
43 Theorize
48 Coffee break hour
49 Throat-clearing sound
50 One
51 Owns
52 Toll road
53 Maze option

Down

1 Type measures
2 Spot on a domino
3 Lemieux milieu
4 Desert plant
5 Catchall abbr.
6 52 cards
7 Hair goop
8 Green stone
9 Gave details
10 Incite
11 Indigent
16 Spigot
20 "The Greatest"
21 Mardi — 22 Staffer
23 Samples
24 Prejudice
26 — gin fizz
27 "Jeopardy!" legend Jennings
28 Verifiable
29 Lip
31 Conifer exudation
34 Cruise or Selleck
35 Broadband ancestor
37 Dallas sch.
38 Morbid style of rock music
39 Concept
40 Welsh emblem
41 Pinnacle
44 — Beta Kappa
45 Literary collection
46 — for tat
47 Biblical verb ending

▶ Yesterday's answer

P	I	E	S	■	K	I	D	■	P	A	C	T
A	D	E	L	A	I	D	E	■	E	C	H	O
C	O	L	U	M	N	A	R	■	T	H	I	N
■	■	■	R	O	D	■	A	P	I	E	G	E
S	P	O	R	K	■	K	N	O	T	■	■	■
A	R	T	Y	■	M	A	G	N	E	T	S	■
W	I	T	■	G	A	R	E	D	■	R	U	E
■	M	O	U	R	N	E	D	■	A	I	M	S
■	■	M	A	I	N	■	D	R	O	O	P	■
T	H	E	L	M	A	■	F	R	O	■	■	■
A	U	R	A	■	C	O	L	U	M	B	I	A
M	E	N	U	■	A	V	E	M	A	R	I	A
P	S	S	T	■	L	A	X	■	S	A	I	S

For today's crossword answers and for expanded horoscopes, go to metronews.ca

Sudoku

3								9
			2		9			
	5	9	6		8	7	1	
	3			5			4	
2								5
	6			1			9	
	4	8	7		5	1	2	
			8		4			
7								6

How to play

Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

Yesterday's answer ▶

1	4	7	8	6	9	3	2	5
2	8	5	4	3	7	9	6	1
3	9	6	1	5	2	4	7	8
6	5	2	9	8	3	1	4	7
7	1	8	5	2	4	6	9	3
9	3	4	7	1	6	5	8	2
5	2	9	3	4	8	7	1	6
4	6	1	2	7	5	8	3	9
8	7	3	6	9	1	2	5	4

Send a KISS

You can now post your kiss, and read even more kisses, online at metronews.ca/kiss.

Prince Charming/Robbie Bear
Sorry, I'm not interested anymore. Thanks for sending the fake messages that I am not author of.
FROM THE DEVIL

Not sure if you wrote me today
I'm not confident enough that it came from you. Because the last time I called you, you didn't even know who I was. I've never been so embarassed. I want more than anything for you to tuck me in. If it's the devil, then know this, I'm so happy and I get happier everyday. You can write all you want, but it will never make it better or change anything. I feel sorry for you. Dolphin
FROM I CAN'T COMMUNICATE LIKE THIS!

Today
8°/0°
Partly cloudy
Wednesday
4°/-1°
Sunny
Know what the weather will be 14 days from now.
Check the 14 day trend.
©The Weather Network 2011

Today's horoscope

♈ Aries March 21-April 20 Why stress yourself out when with the same amount of effort you can have a great deal of fun?
♉ Taurus April 21-May 21 You will be tempted to go to extremes in your personal life today.
♊ Gemini May 22-June 21 Put money worries behind you and do something that makes you feel good about yourself. If you feel the need to get away, just go.
♋ Cancer June 22-July 22 Promise yourself here and now that no matter what happens over the next few days you won't overreact.
♌ Leo July 23-Aug.23 A few days from now you may look back and feel guilty about some of the things you said and did.
♍ Virgo Aug. 24- Sept. 22 You won't hesitate to help someone in need today.
♎ Libra Sept. 23-Oct. 23 Someone you meet while working or pursuing a creative interest will get your heart racing today.
♏ Scorpio Oct. 24-Nov. 22 You enjoy doing what others say cannot (or should not) be done, but don't get carried away and do something that leaves a black mark against your name.
♐ Sagittarius Nov. 23-Dec. 21 Do something different today, something no one would expect you to do.
♑ Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 20 You may want to impress someone who means a lot to you but don't go over the top.
♒ Aquarius Jan. 21-Feb. 18 You have nothing to worry about and everything to look forward to.
♓ Pisces Feb. 19-March 20. Think with your head but feel with your heart. Listen to what your heart tells you today — and act on it. **SALLY BROMPTON**

Caption contest

MARK HUMPHREY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MARTIAL TREZZINI/KEYSTONE/THE AP

WIN!

You write it!

Write a funny caption for the image above and send it to play@metronews.ca — the winning caption will be published in tomorrow's Metro.

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Set contents include a 100ML Eau de Toilette Spray and 2 travel size Soothing and Moisturizing After-shave Gel and Hair and Body Energizing Shower Gel.

For Her:

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Set includes a 50ML eau de parfum spray and 2 travel size velvet body lotion and creamy shower gel.

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